

In the claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

- 1 1. (Currently Amended) A hydrodynamic suturing instrument, comprising in combination: a syringe having a barrel and plunger and a connector for detachably mounting a needle, the barrel having a capacity to receive a predetermined size and length of suture and sufficient fluid to draw the suture into the barrel and to expel the suture from the barrel, said syringe defining a hydraulic path and said plunger being mounted to act on the hydraulic path to draw the suture into the syringe; an elongated cannulated suturing needle having a proximal end and a distal end, a lumen of a size to receive said predetermined size and length of suture extending from said proximal end to an opening at said distal end for the passage of a suture, a connector at said proximal end adapted to connect to said syringe barrel connector and said distal end configured to pass with a suture through tissue; and said distal end configured with a sharp point extending forward of said opening to said lumen, said opening configured to receive a suture extending from said lumen along an outer surface of said needle wherein said sharp point extends forward of said suture.
- 1 2. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 1 wherein said needle has a curved configuration at said distal end.
- ‡ 3. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 2 wherein said curved configuration is a cork screw configuration.

1 4. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 2 wherein said curved
2 configuration is a hook configuration.

1 5. (Currently Amended) A suturing instrument according to claim 1 wherein said
2 opening at said distal end is at a side of said cannula and the trailing edge of said
3 opening is rounded.

1 6. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 5 wherein curved configuration
2 is a cork screw configuration.

1 7. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 5 wherein said curved
2 configuration is a hook configuration.

1 8. (Currently Amended) A suturing instrument according to claim 1 further comprising
2 a stiffening cover over a major portion of said needle.

1 9. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 1 further comprising: a forceps
2 having a distal end with jaws and a proximal end with a lever to operate at least one
3 of said jaws and a lumen extending from said proximal end to said distal end for
4 passage of said needle; and said jaws having an opening enabling passage of said
5 needle through tissue grasped in said jaws.

1 10. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 9 wherein said needle is
2 curved.

3 11. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 10 wherein said lumen has an
2 oval configuration to aid in orienting said needle.

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1 12. (Original) A suturing instrument comprising: an elongate tubular member having
2 a distal end and a proximal end and a passage extending from said proximal end to
3 said distal end; first and second jaws on said distal end disposed in opposed
4 relation, one of said first and second jaws being moveable relative to the other and
5 having an opening there through, the other of said first and second jaws including an
6 open end of said passage oriented toward said opening; means at said proximal end
7 for moving said moveable jaw between open and closed positions; a syringe having
8 a needle, the needle of sufficient length to extend a forward end thereof through said
9 passage past said open end and through said opening in said one of said jaws, the
10 needle having a cannula of sufficient size to receive a suture; and said syringe
11 having sufficient capacity to draw a predetermined length of suture and liquid into
12 said needle and expel said suture through said opening.

13 13. (Original) A suturing instrument according to claim 12 wherein said needle has a
2 curved configuration at said forward end.

3 14. (Currently Amended) A suturing instrument according to claim 13 wherein said
2 lumen cannula has an oval configuration to aid in orienting said needle.

3 15. (Currently Amended) A method of suturing comprising the steps of: providing an
2 elongate needle having a distal end and a proximal end and a lumen extending from
3 said proximal end to said distal end having sufficient size for passage of a
4 predetermined size suture, said distal end having a tip configured for passage with a
5 suture through a tissue; providing a syringe detachably connected to said needle
6 proximal end; selecting and introducing a length of suture into at least said needle

7 from outside of said syringe and said needle; filling said syringe with a quantity of
8 liquid; passing said distal end of said needle with said suture through a tissue to be
9 sutured; and expelling said length of suture from said distal end of said needle by
10 hydraulic force from a quantity of said liquid in said syringe.

11 16. (Original) A method of suturing according to claim 15 wherein said step of
2 selecting and introducing a length of suture into at least said needle comprises:
3 inserting an end of said suture into said distal end of said needle; submerging said
4 distal end of said needle with said suture in a quantity of liquid; and drawing said
5 length of suture and a quantity of liquid into said needle with said syringe.

6 17. (Original) A method of suturing according to claim 16 wherein said needle is
2 provided to have a curved configuration at said distal end.

3 18. (Original) A method of suturing according to claim 15 wherein said needle is
2 provided to have a stiffening cover over a major portion of said needle.

3 19. (Original) A method of suturing according to claim 15 further comprising the
2 steps of: providing an elongate tubular member having a distal end and a proximal
3 end and a passage extending from said proximal end to said distal end, first and
4 second jaws on said distal end disposed in opposed relation, one of said first and
5 second jaws being moveable relative to the other and having an opening there
6 through, the other of said first and second jaws including an open end of said
7 passage oriented toward said opening, and means at said proximal end for moving
8 said moveable jaw between open and closed positions; providing said elongate
9 needle of sufficient length to extend said distal end thereof through said passage

10 past said open end and through said opening in said one of said jaws; and grasping
11 a tissue to be sutured between said first and second jaws; and extending a said
12 distal end thereof through said passage past said open end through said tissue and
13 through said opening in said one of said jaws.

14 20. (Original) A method of suturing according to claim 19 wherein said needle is
2 provided to have a curved configuration at said distal end; and said passage having
3 an oval configuration to accommodate and maintain said curved needle oriented.